

HOPKINTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes

May 12, 2022 Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. Members in attendance, Gary Marsh, Deborah O'Leary, Bradley Hodge, David Augustyn and Dawn Spears. Quorum present.

Minutes of the 2/10/22 meeting were approved.

Featured items:

Review of budget and recent expenditures:

We purchased four kiosk signs for Land Trust Properties total cost \$747.48.

Remaining budget for this year is \$1,121.08

Nomination and Election of Officers for 2022.

Gary Marsh was nominated and seconded as Chair. All votes in favor.

David Augustyn was nominated and seconded as Vice Chair. All votes in favor.

Deborah O'Leary was nominated and seconded as Secretary. All votes in favor.

IV. Old Business:

Review of Farm Viability ordinance. Some of the Commission recommendations for changes in the ordinance have not been made. Particularly sizes of farm stands and definitions of farms smaller than 5 acres. How do we encourage farm production even on small farms? How to define a Micro farm? More work will need to be done on this issue.

Discussion of current solar ordinance. Our current ordinance does not allow commercial solar outside of a manufacturing zone. Accessory solar is allowed. This includes small ground mounted for residential and commercial uses i.e. wells, as well as roof mounted with proper permits. The one-two or three acre commercial grade solar on farms has been eliminated. Solar legislation at the State level is something we need to keep an eye on.

Review of Brushy Brook Development Project: (Deb) This project is due to come in front of the Planning Board in June. The question of adequate well water supply for the 140 homes in the development is still unclear. The OWTS for the project is a combination of Leach fields and individual sewage ejection tanks. This plan has not received full approval of DEM. We also wonder how the new DEM wetlands regulations may change the current plans.

V. New Business:

New DEM Wetlands Regulations Changes:

The changes will begin July 1st. The setbacks for most will increase. The call for a full Vegetated buffer is something new. There are changes in definitions i.e. Jurisdictional area, freshwater wetlands, buffer and buffer zone.

Ideas for Community Involvement in Conservation: Dawns Spears made the suggestion to inquire re farmer interest in a local (hopkinton) farmer's market perhaps at Crandall Field. This would be good for farms and the town residents as well. Deb and Dawn to send out query to farmers. Our new town communication committee could help with getting the word out to residents. We will reach out to them when they meet. The Meeting was Adjourned at 8:25pm

Action items and topics for the June 9th meeting:

Farm viability: definition of a micro farm (Gary)

Farmer's Market questionnaire

Farmer's Market do we need permit? Zoning? (Deb)

Should we consider hybrid meetings?